



Natural Resources Conservation Service
6013 Lakeside Blvd.
Indianapolis, IN 46278

October 14, 2005

INDIANA BULLETIN NO. 300-6-1

SUBJECT: LTP – Environmental Quality Incentives Program FY 2006 Ranking – Local
Priorities

Purpose: To distribute guidance on establishing the Local Ranking Priorities for the Environmental
Quality Incentives Program FY 2006 Ranking System.

Expiration Date: September 30, 2006.

ACTION REQUIRED BY: December 2, 2005

**Local Ranking Priorities and a list of attendees of the Local Work Group must be
submitted to the Area Office.**

Statewide Conference Call: October 19, 2005, 9:00 – 10:00 – details to follow via e-mail.

NRCS Indiana will use the National Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) Ranking System through ProTracts in FY 2006. One component to the National Ranking System is Local Ranking Priorities. These will be established at the county level in consultation with the Local Work Group.

The Local Work Group should consist of individuals from all public and private entities interested in conservation in the county. At a minimum, members of the following entities should be invited to participate in the Local Work Group:

- NRCS designated conservationist
- Member(s) of the Conservation District board(s) or equivalent
- Member(s) of the County FSA Committee
- FSA county executive director or designee
- Cooperative Extension (board members or manager)
- State or local elected or appointed officials
- Other Federal and State government representatives
 - Indiana Department of Natural Resources – Division of Fish and Wildlife
 - Indiana Department of Natural Resources – Division of Forestry
 - Indiana State Department of Agriculture
 - Indiana Department of Environmental Management – Watershed Specialists
 - US Fish & Wildlife Service Biologists
 - Others
- Others

Attached is a list of the eligible resource concerns and/or priority watershed opportunities, collectively referred to as "resource priorities". Further, the resource priorities are grouped into nine categories. Resource Concerns are defined in the Indiana e-FOTG Section III.

The Local Work Group will convene and identify the top 10 resource priorities in the county, with no more than two resource priorities chosen from any one category. For example, if all four resource concerns under the Soil Erosion category are of importance in the county, for the EQIP Local Ranking purposes, the Local Work Group will select only the top two resource concerns associated with Soil Erosion.

If watersheds are selected as a resource priority, they will count against the 10 available. For example, if two watersheds are chosen, eight resource concerns may be chosen.

Once the Local top 10 resource priorities are identified, the Local Work Group must then rank them in order of importance. The most important local resource priority will receive the highest ranking points and should be designated as #1, followed by the second most important as #2, etc.

The attached list of resource priorities as well as a list of attendees of the Local Work Group meeting must be submitted to the Area Program Specialist, or other Area Staff as designated by the Area Conservationist, by close of business on December 2, 2005. Each county's list will be maintained and archived at the local level for reference during ranking, as well as at the Area level for Quality Assurance purposes.

For EQIP in Indiana in FY 2006, field visits and conservation plans will be required prior to ranking the applications. If applicants on the FY 2005 deferred list are interested in continuing with their application for FY 2006 funding consideration, or if any new EQIP applications have been received after the FY05 EQIP deadline of December 17, 2004, schedule field appointments to develop the plan and verify that the practices they wish to implement will address existing resource concerns. Further guidance related to EQIP FY06 and establishing planning priorities, deadlines, etc. will be distributed in the near future.

Questions related to this bulletin will be coordinated through Dwayne Howard, ASTC – Programs at (317) 290-3200, ext. 386, or to Bruce Milligan, Resource Conservationist at (317) 290-3200, ext. 347.

JANE E. HARDISTY
State Conservationist

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Attachment

cc: Indiana State Technical Committee